PREFACE

This narrative is an overview of the history of a small area west of the city of Wilmington in New Castle County, Delaware. For convenience we are calling this the Springs/Red Clay Area; Springs was at one time a generally accepted name for the area, and Red Clay Creek is the area's dominant natural feature. The Delaware Department of Transportation has requested this overview in order to assess historic properties that might be affected by the Department's work on the Newport and Gap Turnpike between the Kirkwood Highway and Milltown Road. Since history does not have such precise boundaries, the narrative covers a slightly larger area, an area that is historically connected with the Department of Transportation's project area. The main objective of the narrative is to point out those sites that are already listed in the National Register of Historic Places and those that may be eligible for listing. Therefore, the narrative emphasizes the history of the area as it relates to the extant buildings.

Comments on properties already listed in the National Register and on the additional properties that may be eligible for listing are at the end of the narrative. Existing National Register nominations for the Fell Historic District, the Greenbank Mill District, and the Wilmington and Western Railroad give more details on the buildings and structures within those districts.

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SPRINGS/RED CLAY AREA

The small section of New Castle County bounded roughly by the Robert W. Kirkwood Highway on the south, Faulkland Road on the North, the Newport Gap Pike on the West, and the Wilmington and Western Railroad on the East is now surrounded by modern commercial and residential development. However, it still contains tangible evidence of two centuries of diverse human activity. Farming and milling dominated the economy here in the eighteenth century. An early nineteenth century summer resort and spa once stood in the present Brandywine Springs State Park; the spa eventually became an amusement park with a summer-cottage development beside it. Red Clay Creek and its tributary, Hyde Run, once provided power for mills and still cuts through the area lending it scenic beauty. The Wilmington and Western Railroad has wound through the area since the late nineteenth century and has evolved from its origins as a freight and passenger line into a tourist attraction. In the early twentieth century a trolley line brought excursionists from Wilmington to Brandywine Springs

Amusement Park, supplementing its passenger fares by carrying prisoners to the New Castle County Work House, which also stood within the area. People who lived here in the nineteenth century often referred to the area as "Springs". On the basis of this historical designation and the proximity of the area to the Red Clay Creek, this paper refers to the area as Springs/Red Clay.

Red Clay Creek is the reason for much of the diverse activity that has taken place here over the years. It was the second most important millstream in New Castle County, but from where it rises in Chester County to where it enters the Christina River, Red Clay Creek is only thirteen miles long. Between Lancaster Pike and the Kirkwood Highway the stream winds through a rough and hilly section. In many places the river banks are steep and the creek's downhill course and sometimes rocky bed give it beauty as well as the speed needed for operating those early mills. Hyde Run, an even shorter stream, has many similar characteristics and also supported mill sites. In 1873 as rail excursions became popular with tourists, one writer described Red Clay Creek as a stream on which there were "a number of mills, attracted by its swift torrent, amid

scenery of steeps and views comparable to that on the Lehigh about Mauch Chunk"1.

The Springs/Red Clay area is in the southeast section of Mill Creek Hundred, appropriately named for its many mill sites. Mill Creek Hundred extends on the north to the Pennsylvania border and includes elevations of up to 400 feet, high points in Delaware. Much of the land is rocky, but it was settled and farmed at an early date. The state assessment lists for 1804 included 99 log houses, 48 stone houses, and 21 brick houses, indicating the simple lifestyle of the inhabitants.[2]

Like all of Delaware, Mill Creek Hundred was at one time owned by the Penns, and the Penn family granted large tracts of land to various purchasers. Thomas Wollaston was the first settler in Mill Creek Hundred in the seventeenth century. Many of his descendants continued to live in the Wilmington area, and some became large landholders. [3]

Until recently Mill Creek Hundred was a rural area. The early towns in the Hundred were somewhat scattered, and many were simply clusters of a few buildings. In 1849, the Price and Rea map shows almost no towns except

Stanton, the main town of the Hundred. The small settlements and towns did not have specific boundaries, and locations were often identified by a landmark, a resident, or the Post office that served them.

Faulkland, one of the names for the area near Faulkland Road, was named for William Faulk, a miller who lived and had a small merchant mill north of the present Faulkland Road. In 1795-98 William Faulk purchased the sawmill and gristmill built by the Evans family of which Oliver Evans was a member. After William Faulk's death, his son John Faulk became the proprietor, and he in turn eventually sold the mill to the Fell family [4]

The grist mills on Red Clay Creek, like those on Brandywine Creek, produced an excellent grade of flour, were close to the source of wheat, and were near the water route to Philadelphia. The Red Clay millers, like the Brandywine millers, preferred to operate as merchant millers purchasing grain, milling it, and selling the flour. It was much less profitable for them to do custom milling for the local farmer who brought his grain to the mill to grind for his own use. However, Delaware's state legislature in 1785, made it mandatory for most merchant millers to

devote two days each week to custom grinding for local farmers, so the Red Clay millers became both merchant and custom millers.[5]. Farming continued to be important through the late nineteenth century as directories show. The farmers continued to grow wheat in New Castle County until the end of the nineteenth century.

Delaware has always been largely agricultural, and its chief crops in the eighteenth century were wheat and corn. The soft, fine quality local wheat produced the superfine flour for which the state became famous. The average farm was between one and two hundred acres and was close enough to navigable waters to be within reach of the world's markets. [6] The earliest settlers built small gristmills along the streams of New Castle County as early as the seventeenth century. Small sawmills developed at about the same time.

With the passage of time larger merchant grain mills developed as well as mills of other types. In "That Never Failing Stream" Carroll W. Pursell tells the story of milling along Red Clay Creek in the nineteenth century. There were two sawmills on the creek in the 1670s; one at Stanton and one at Greenbank. [7] By the mid-eighteenth

century there were additional mills, comparable in size to the more famous ones on Brandywine Creek, only a few miles away in New Castle County. The Evans family operated a gristmill on Red Clay Creek just north of the present Brandywine Springs State Park. Here, Oliver Evans invented ways to make the milling process more automatic and less arduous for the miller. He devised the elevator to carry material upstairs, the descender to carry it down, the screw conveyer and the drill to carry it horizontally, and the hopper boy to automatically rake the flour for cooling and drying. In 1785 Evans installed his new inventions in his own mill, the mill that would become the Fell Spice Mill. Eventually, many millers adopted Evans' process. Nearly another century passed before the "New Process" using a purifier to clean cracked wheat and chilled iron rolls to pulverize it again revolutionized the milling industry and improved on Evans' process. [8]

Sawmills, usually small operations cutting lumber for local use, operated through the eighteenth century on Red Clay Creek. Other types of mills also began to operate along Red Clay Creek. As Pursell explains, most textiles in colonial America were woven in the home. However, two of

the processes necessary to producing fabric, fulling (locking the fibers together) and carding (untangling and straightening wool fibers) were often done in mills. In 1822 Robert Robinson did custom carding at a cotton factory on Hyde Run.[9] At his Madison Factory, attached to the Greenbank Mill (See Photo #1), John R. Phillips manufactured woolen.

Philips apparently tore down a much earlier Swedish mill that had stood next to the Greenbank Mill and built the fieldstone Madison Factory, named for President Madison, in 1811. Like several other New Castle Countians, including E.I. du Pont and William Young, Philips succumbed to the Merino mania and established a flock of Merino sheep to supply his mill with raw wool. This enterprise was to profit only for the short duration of the War of 1812 while British goods, including textiles, were not available in America. As soon as the war was over, British goods were on the market again, underselling American-made textiles.[10] Cotton and woolen mills also operated at Auburn, Yorklyn, and Stanton on Red Clay Creek and on Hyde Run.

Milling on Red Clay Creek further diversified with the advent of John Garrett's Snuff Mill near the

Pennsylvania state line, paper mills on the lower creek, and mills for grinding fertilizer materials, and iron rolling mills. None of these enterprises were within the Springs/Red Clay area. [11]

However, the Greenbank Mill, under the management of Isaac D. Philips and William G. Philips using the company name of Wm. G. Philips & Bro., started to manufacture hubs, spokes and felloes (the wooden wheel) for carriages built in nearby Wilmington. The mill produced wooden farmer's forks, folding chairs, croquet mallets, and other wood specialities. The firm took in John P. Wells, who unfortunately left with the firm's money. Wells' action brought the wood business to an end at the mill, but the gristmill continued to operate. In the meantime, the Fell family had purchased the old Evans Mill north of Brandywine Springs in 1828 and converted it to a spice mill that continued to operate until the last quarter of the nineteenth century. [12]

The Springs/Red Clay area was not only a milling center, it became a local transportation hub, for good roads improved the transport of grain and other goods from the agricultural interior to mills and shipping points. In

colonial and early federal America most transportation was by water; the new nation's roads were sparse and rough. In 1792 a new road stretched from Philadelphia through the Great Valley of Pennsylvania to Lancaster, a grain producing center, and America's first inland city. Users paid a toll that went to the company that built and operated the road, the nation's first turnpike. It set off a turnpike boom.

In 1808 Delaware's first two turnpike companies were incorporated with the goal of creating a good road from Wilmington to the Lancaster Turnpike. These companies were the Gap and Newport Turnpike Company and the Wilmington Turnpike Company. The former was to construct a road from Newport to Gap, Pennsylvania, where it would join the Philadelphia-Lancaster Turnpike, and the latter was to build a road from Wilmington to Newport. [13] The turnpike company's charter required that the road be no more than 100 feet wide and that a 20-foot width was to be an artifical roadbed of wood, stone, gravel or similar materials. Four and a half miles of road were built by 1813, and it was complete in 1818. This was the first successful Delaware turnpike. [14] Turnpike building accelerated in Delaware as it did in other states, and the Newport-Gap Pike was only

the first of many. However, the fact that Delaware's first turnpike was here attests to the importance of the Red Clay mills.

The turnpike spawned taverns where the men who drove the conestoga wagons from Pennsylvania to the Red Clay Mills could stop for food, drink, and rest. Holton Yarnall kept a tavern on the Newport-Gap Turnpike between Hyde Run and Faulkland Road and appropriately named it "Conestoga Wagon." In 1816 he advertised for sale an 80 acre tract that contained buildings plus a chalybeate mineral spring. This land was 5 1/2 miles west of Wilmington. No buyers responded to the advertisement, and when Yarnall repeated his offer in 1822 he stated that the turnpike passed through it and that the dwelling house was a tavern. Still no buyer appeared, and the property was sold at sheriff's sale on July 29, 1827. The purchaser, William Seal, president of the Bank of Wilmington and Brandywine paid $2,805 for the property. Less than a week later Seal sold the property for the same amount to The Brandywine Chalybeate Springs Company. A group of Wilmington businessmen headed by James Canby, a descendent of the Quaker Brandywine milling family and the president of local insurance, gas, and railroad

companies, had formed this company a year earlier with the objective of purchasing the land around the chalybeate spring and building a hotel. [15] The few miles of turnpike built to encourage trade also provided a route to one of America's early summer resorts and spas.

The chalybeate spring was the primary reason for building a resort hotel; chalybeate means impregnated with salts of iron or having the taste of iron. The spring on the Yarnall property that was to become the centerpiece for the Brandywine Springs Hotel already had a reputation for containing sulphur and iron, both considered beneficial to human health. The water had an unappetizing odor, taste, and color that probably enhanced its reputation in the age before scientific medicine. By the time Brandywine Springs developed as a resort, the spring or spa was well-established as a vacation place in America. As Richard Guy Wilson wrote in "Ninetweenth Century American Resorts and Hotels":

> The first American resort, at least for the white man, was probably Stafford Springs, near Hartford,Connecticut, which fashionable Puritans frequented in the seventeenth century. The early history of American resorts is generally a tale of searching for

> health giving waters, much in the manner of Europeans at Bath and Saint-Moritz, and consequently there is a series of spring resorts in Pennsylvania, Virginia, and of course, Saratoga Springs, New York. The health requirement stayed with many Americans throughout the nineteenth century and still today, ancestors of these early resorts, such as The Homestead at Hot Springs, Virginia, continues this tradition to some degree.[16]

Construction on the hotel at Brandywine Springs began in 1826 before the company had full ownership of the property. There seems to be no existing picture of this first building, but it was advertised as accommodating 300 guests. It opened in 1827 under the management of Charles Stanley.

A local resident, Justa Justis, had been in charge of construction of the original building, and the company engaged him to enlarge it in 1830. Brandywine Springs benefited from the publicity given to chalybeate water as a cure for rheumatism, ulcers, scrofula, jaundice, and the effects of either a sedentary life or "excessive and free living."[17] During this early period two visitors to the resort, Jonathan Fell and Matthew Newkirk, apparently were captivated by the Springs/Red Clay Area. Both invested heavily in the area, although in different ways. Fell, who

owned a spice manufacturing business in Philadelphia, purchased John Faulk's mill site just north of Brandywine Springs in 1828. Here Fell established a spice mill and the country estate which is now a part of the Fell Historic District. [18] Newkirk became the owner of the Brandywine Springs Hotel.

Despite the health benefits of the spring water, the hotel was not profitable in its early years. It was for sale again in 1833, when Matthew Newkirk purchased the entire property for $15,500. Newkirk, one of the richest men in Philadelphia, accumulated large holdings in land, railroads, and other enterprises. Some of his Mill Creek Hundred neighbors apparently did not think he was completely honest, and some even suspected that he had put old rusty iron in the spring to give it its distinctive taste and color.[19]

Newkirk hired Thomas U. Walter, who at this time was working on two designs for Nicholas Biddle: the now-famous Girard College and the portico for Biddle's home, Andalusia. Walter had not yet designed the wings and dome of the U.S. Capitol. These three works would make him one of the nation's most famous architects. Walter's painting

of the Brandywine Springs Hotel shows the alterations he made to the buildings as well as the Greek Revival house flanked by two smaller houses designed for the personal use of Newkirk and his daughters. Newkirk made many other improvements to the buildings and grounds. None remain today. The financial panic of 1837 certainly affected business at the resort of Brandywine Springs, and the increasing popularity of seaside resorts also took business away.

Business became so bad at the hotel that Newkirk decided to rent it for use as a school. The school had been open for only a few months when it burned, destroying the once elegant hotel. In 1855 Newkirk decided to sell the property. Soon a new owner connected Newkirk's house to his daughters' houses, made some additions and alterations and created a new Brandywine Springs Hotel. The Civil War temporarily ended the days of the resort hotel. The grounds became Camp Du Pont, named for Rear Admiral Samuel Frances Du Pont, and the 4th regiment of Delaware Volunteer Infantry camped there in 1862. Another regiment camped there in 1864. With no hope of regaining the patronage of its southern guests, the hotel went on the market again.

Franklin Fell, the son of Jonathan Fell, who had operated the spice mill just north of Brandywine Springs, purchased the entire Brandywine Springs property.

Jonathan Fell lived for only a short time after purchasing the mill in 1828, and his sons inherited the business. Although the Fells had been Quakers, Franklin became an Episcopalian and actually purchased the former resort so that he could give it to the Episcopal Church to establish a girls' school. The church refused his offer of the property. Soon after this, Franklin Fell died and his son, William Jenks Fell, inherited the old hotel and land.[20] Before his death in 1875 Franklin Fell made an arrangement with the new Wilmington & Western Railroad that would permit the line to operate through his land for a fee provided it built a "neat and substantial depot at Faulkland at which no alcoholic beverages were to be sold or used" and that all trains would stop at the station.[21]

At the time Franklin Fell made this agreement with the new railroad his spice mill was still in operation and he maintained part of his business in Philadelphia, where it had originated. However, the old spice mill, the mill originally owned by Evans and Faulk, burned in 1867. The

Fells built a new mill that burned in 1874. After this fire, the Fells again rebuilt the mill, but it too burned in 1878. This ended spice milling on Red Clay Creek.[22] The Greenbank Mill, as noted above, continued to operate as did others on the upper and lower Red Clay Creek.

Until the advent of the Wilmington and Western Railroad (see photos #8, #9, #10), the millers of Red Clay Creek depended upon the old Newport-Gap Turnpike and other marginal roads to haul materials in and send finished products out via the ports on the Christina River. The Philadephia, Wilmington, and Baltimore Railroad had been in operation in Wilmington for four decades before a railroad came to the Springs/Red Clay area. It took several years to put the Wilmington and Western Railroad into operation after the new line had been chartered. One problem was deciding whether the route would be along the White Clay Creek or Red Clay Creek. The Board of Directors eventually selected the latter, and on July 8, 1871, Joshua T. Heald led the groundbreaking ceremony.[23]

Joshua T. Heald, Wilmington real estate and streetcar developer, thought that the construction of railroads westward into Pennsylvania would encourage

development in Wilmington. Heald was instrumental in the formation of the Wilmington Board of Trade, developed the Shallcross property in the northwest section of the city, the Highlands, a large area on the East side, and low cost housing south of the Third Street Bridge. Heald also started the Wilmington City Railway Company, a horsecar line that ran from the railroad station up Market Street and out Delaware Avenue. [24] It is not surprising that he was also president of the Wilmington and Western Railroad.

The railroad officially opened on October 19, 1872 for both freight and passenger service. Although the road was providing a much-needed service to the Red Clay Creek millers, it was not profitable and the Panic of 1873 forced it into receivership. In reorganization it took the name Delaware Western and became involved in a struggle for railroad routes that resulted in its purchase by the B & O Railroad. [25] Although the railroad was not a financial success there were additional people moving into the Springs/Red Clay area during its early years.

Only a few names are shown in the Spring/Red Clay area on the map of 1849. These include the two millers, Phillips and Fell, Matthew Newkirk, who operated the

Brandywine Springs Hotel, and a member of the Justice family. By 1868 there were additional residents in the area. S. Chandler, a physician, lived at the intersection of Faulkland Road and Newport Gap Pike in a house that is still standing (See Photo #32). John B. Robinson, a farmer, lived at the house which is today 2311 Newport Gap Pike (See Photos #11, #12). Robinson was later described as "among those honored citizens of the State of Delaware who lived quiet, uneventful lives, attending to the daily round of duties". He was probably related to Robert P. Robinson who farmed and did wool carding at a small mill on Hyde Run.[26] John B. Robinson grew up on a farm, attended Friends' School in Wilmington and returned to the family farm near Cedars, formerly called Springs.[27].

By the 1870s the Faulkland Post Office, north of Brandywine Springs, served this area. The directory of 1876-77 included the residents from the Greenbank Mill on the south to the Fell Spice Mill on the north in Faulkland.[28] A few years later, in 1882, the directory described Faulkland as having a population of 200 residents and many more than that in the summer when the Brandywine Springs hotel was open. This directory listed the Fell and

Greenbank Mills and also included over thirty farmers.[29] The year round population of Faulkland remained at 200 in 1897. At this time farmland was valued at about $100 per acre (it was $150 per acre at nearby Farnhurst) and there were about forty farmers. In addition to millers, the community had two physicians, a surveyor, a minister, a music teacher, a butcher and general store operator, a blacksmith, and several carpenters.[30] Although the Baist map of 1894 shows Greenbank and Greenbank Station, it was evidently not important enough for Greenbank to be considered a separate community in the eyes of the directory publishers.

Near the end of the century, in 1894, John Robinson owned all of the land that is today The Cedars, John J. Flinn, a farmer, owned the land that was to become the site of the New Castle County Work House, and Mary Megargle lived in what is now a large grey house at the intersection of the Newport Gap Pike and Greenbank Road (See Photo #5). There were two other houses to the south of Megargle (See Photos #26 & #27). Samuel Cranston, another farmer, lived on the southwest side of the Newport-Gap Pike a short distance from the Wilmington and Western Railroad.

There were a few additional residents (See Photos #28-#30), but the very low population density gives no indication of the active milling industry and resort life of the area.[31] The Fells built several new houses on their estate, and there were additional new houses on Faulkland Road.

The Brandwine Springs Hotel was entering yet another new phase. Although the boosters of the Wilmington and Western seemed convinced that the railroad would bring guests to the hotel and make it profitable, this did not happen. The Fells rented the hotel to a succession of managers and to a school. The hotel and the Brandywine Springs were essentially a financial failure until Richard W. Crook took over in 1886.

Richard W. Crook was born in 1850 and moved to Elsmere, just outside Wilmington, at an early age. Crook seemed to sense exactly what would appeal to the popular taste of his time. His own interest in show business and the increased leisure time of working Americans led to Crook's long involvement with the amusement park and vacation cottage development in the Springs/Red Clay area. In 1886 Crook and his father-in-law, James Megratten, who

owned an upholstery business in Wilmington, announced the reopening of Brandywine Springs in the local newspaper:

> This old and celebrated summer resort (5 minute walk from the nearest railroad station) has been thoroughly refitted and put in complete order and will be kept first-class in every respect. A large pavilion for parties, ample stables for horses and carriages. Will be open for select excursions and picnics. Prices for board will be moderate. Special rates to families. Four trains each way daily to Wilmington. Will be ready for guests by May 20.[32]

Crook secured the financial backing of John and James Dobson, who owned a carpet factory in Philadelphia. He also formed a partnership with William Jenks Fell for at least one season. Under Crook's management, the old resort evolved into an amusement park and became popular for picnics and one day excursions from Wilmington. The hotel and dining room continued to operate, but the springs were no longer an attraction. Instead, Crook built a toboggan slide, a carousel, an outdoor theater, and other amusement features.[33] As Carol Hoffecker explains in Wilmington, Delaware, Portrait of an Industrial City, the city with its many industrial employment opportunities was expanding, and

more people had the time and money for entertainment; local amusement parks, including Brandywine Springs, were perhaps the most important source of entertainment. Hoffecker credits the amusement parks with helping to make the city liveable. [34]

A merry-go-round existed as early as 1800 in Salem Massachusetts, and there were occasional appearances of similar rides over the following decades. By the 1870s Atlantic City had a Ferris Wheel and Coney Island had a merry-go-round. The World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago featured amusement rides in 1893, but a number of resorts had already begun to install rides by then. [35] By the early twentieth century nearly every American city had an amusement park. Richard Flint, writing about early amusement parks, notes that many of them grew up around resort hotels that were trying to expand their business. While the earlier public parks sought to create a place where the industrial worker could be close to nature, the amusement park offered participatory entertainment with no effort at spiritual uplift. [36] The amusement park at Brandywine Springs was a part of the national trend.

Richard W. Crook's dream was to expand the amusement park and then operate a trolley line to it from Wilmington. Here, too, Crook was following a national trend. In the days before the automobile the trolley lines in most cities were busy during the week carrying people to and from work. An amusement park provided a destination to which the trolleys could carry passengers on week-ends and holidays. In fact many of the amusement parks and trolley lines were jointly owned. As the lines began to operate with electricity, they generated their own power and also provided power for attractions in their amusement parks.[37]

William Jenks Fell, as owner of the land, tried to secure passage of a bill by the Delaware State legislature that would give him the right of way for a road and eventually a trolley line through the adjoining farmlands to Brandywine Springs. He was not successful, and it took several years of business maneouvering before the trolley line ran all the way from Wilmington to Brandywine Springs Park. In 1895 the Wilmington and Elsmere Electric Railway Company carried passengers between the park and the Wilmington City Line where they transferred to the Wilmington City Railway.

Two years later the Elsmere company and the city company cooperated further by running one car over the length of track, but by having different crews operating inside and outside the city. At the end of 1897 the Brandywine Springs Company won the right to take its cars into the city, and a year later the Wilmington and Brandywine Springs line opened. William C. Crook was the President, Dr. L. Heisler Ball, a member of the Delaware Assembly who lived at the corner of Newport-Gap Pike and Faulkland Road was Secretary and Treasurer. Ball literally had the inside track in pressing for the granting of trolley routes. A competitor, the Wilmington City Railways, claimed the exclusive right to operate on city streets. This line had been started in 1864 by Joshua T. Heald, who also started the Wilmington and Western Railroad; more important, by the end of the nineteenth century it operated a competing amusement park, Shellpot Amusement Park.

In 1900 Richard W. Crook organized the Peoples Railway, which received the right to operate on the Wilmington streets. It purchased the old Elsmere Electric Railway and laid tracks on Greenhill Avenue to Sixth Street, to Poplar Street, to Seventh Street, and to Railroad Avenue.

Crook was the general manager and Ball was the secretary of this company. At last Crook controlled a trolley line that could operate over the entire route between Wilmington and his amusement park.[38]

The official opening of the new trolley route in May 1901 was marked by one of Wilmington's worst street railway accidents when two cars ran into each other. Nevertheless, Crook continued to add new attractions to his amusement park and continued to operate it until 1915. In that year he sold the Peoples Railway and the facilities of the Brandywine Springs Amusement Park to his competitor. This brought both Brandywine Springs Amusement Park and Shellpot Park under one management.[39] Today nothing but photographs, memories, and a few foundations remain of Brandywine Springs Amusement Park and the earlier hotel that stood on the site. A different venture of Richard W. Crook's adjacent to the amusement park continues to flourish.

In 1900 the Cedars Land and Improvement Company was incorporated with Richard W. Crook as president. In that year Elizabeth and William H. Mitchell sold two tracts to the Cedars Land and Improvement Company that contained

about 85 acres. This was land that Isaac Philips of the Greenbank milling family had conveyed to John B. Robinson in 1855. Christina Robinson who acquired the property sold seven acres to the Wilmington and Brandywine Springs Railway Company in 1898 and two years later sold the balance of the property to the Mitchells. [40] This is almost exactly the same land that today is still the neighborhood called "The Cedars." It appears that Crook intended to expand his amusement park with a cottage area, following a fairly common pattern at the time.

Probably Richard W. Crook and his wife Carrie lived in the house now known as 2311 Newport Gap Pike, an old house that once belonged to John B. Robinson. An old plan of The Cedars shows the area divided into small lots. Although the plan is undated it appears to be quite early because the only buildings shown are those that are now a part of 2311 Newport Gap Pike and two small buildings on the Turnpike north of Harrison Avenue. The Land and Development Company conveyed to the Crooks lots 1 through 16 and lots 69 through 76, the lots included in 2311 Newport Gap Pike. The Crooks sold this property to William Stewart Allmond in 1912. [41]

The same plan shows The Cedars divided into 229 small lots. Washington, Harrison, and Jackson Streets all descend to Hyde Run along which are located the Toboggan, the Board Walk, the Band Shell, the restaurant, a pony track, and other amusement park features. A small lake and island were located at the foot of Maple Avenue where it meets Hyde Run. The Cedars, of course, is named for its abundance of cedar trees. Situated on a high bluff overlooking both Red Clay Creek and Hyde Run, it would have made a pleasant summer retreat from turn of the century Wilmington with its industrial smokestacks, brick streets, and smell of tanning leather.

It is not clear whether The Cedars Land and Development Company wanted to simply sell lots or whether it was also in the business of building houses. In any case there was a flurry of land transfers in 1901, and sales continued until the 1920s.[42] The census of 1910 lists The Cedars as a separate unit, but does not give street addresses. It includes about 45 heads of families, and since they are listed in the census here, they were probably year round residents of The Cedars. Some residents of The Cedars have been told that many of the amusement park

employees lived here. The census of 1910, however, does not indicate that. The majority of the residents were painters, carpenters, laborers, and tradesmen. One, John W. Bennett, was a merchant who owned a store, and Edward Wollaston, presumably of the Wollaston family that had been in this area and in Wilmington for many years, was listed as having his own independent income. Richard W. Crook was listed as a resident, and his occupation was given as Superintendent of the Trolley Road.[43]

During the first decade of the twentieth century, there were evidently enough Methodists in The Cedars and the surrounding area that they felt the need to establish a church. The Cedar Heights Methodist Chapel was organized in 1907 and held meetings in private homes for about a year until the cornerstone for its own building was laid.[44] The outgrowth of the chapel was the small gothic church with its pyramidal-roofed bell tower stands at the corner of Harrison and Maple Avenues (See Photo #25).

A 1913 plan of a small section of The Cedars bounded by Washington, Pine, and Hyde Run shows that there was some further subdivision at that time. This plan dated March 1, 1913 shows the building lots of J.G. Justis

Company. It is interesting to note that the first hotel at Brandywine Springs was built by a member of the Justis family. In any case this plan shows the trolley line running down Washington Avenue and curving as it crosses Hyde Run toward Wilmington. It also shows a new street parallel to Washington Avenue between Pine Avenue and Hyde Run called Cedar Terrace. It is the street known today as Justice Avenue and three small houses shown on the 1913 plan appear to be the present 305, 307, and 309 Justice Avenue.[45]

Today The Cedars gives the impression that it was once intended as a summer cottage community. It contains a mix of styles including some large houses such as 2311 Newport Gap Pike, some large late Victorian houses, some bungalows, and other styles. All but a few of the houses are fully detached. Today we think of a cottage as a small house, often for summer use. Architecturally, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the term derived from A.J. Downing's mid-nineteenth century designs for cottages. Downing believed that the simplest cottage could be designed in what he considered to be good taste

incorporating Gothic, picturesque, and his other favorite motifs.[46]

Through the years Downing's designs were popularized, adapted, and made available in inexpensive published plans. Many of the cottages in The Cedars incorporate Gothic elements and the verandahs favored by Downing. 100 Washington Avenue, for instance, has a short tower at one end, a barge-board, and a verandah, and is said by its owner to date from 1892 (See Photo #15). Other houses, such as 210 Washington Avenue are more in the Bungalow style, small single story houses with a single dormer on the front (See Photo #17). The house at the southwest corner of Harrison and Cedar is almost completely covered with shingles of various shapes and sizes - a reflection of the shingle style popular in many American resorts of the late nineteenth century (See Photo#23). 2501 Cedar Avenue is a very simple camp meeting type of cottage, a plain rectangular cottage with gable roof so often found when more permanent buildings replaced tents at camp meeting sites (See Photo #22). 2606 Maple Avenue is one of a number of small houses with steep gambrel roofs (See Photo #24). Scattered through The Cedars are also a number of houses

similar to 305-307 Justice Avenue: one story rectangular cottages with low pitch gable roofs (See Photo #20). These small houses are so simple that they could almost be built without a plan, but they bear a striking similarity to Downing's Design I for a laborer's cottage [47] Another group of houses, including 300 Washington Avenue, are of the Four Square type, a design that was a part of the rectilinear movement, a stylistic revolt against Queen Anne and other ornate Victorian styles (See Photo #18). By 1895, there were many published plans available for four square houses, and several companies also sold pre-fabricated houses of this type.[48] The Four Square House was also popular in early twentieth century suburbs, which in a sense is what The Cedars became.

It appears that what had started as a summer or resort cottage community soon became a year round residential area. By establishing a trolley line to his amusement park, Crook had also created transportation for people who lived in The Cedars and worked elsewhere. Thus The Cedars also became a late version of a streetcar suburb. Nevertheless, it still retains the mix of architectural styles and sizes of houses typical of many late nineteenth

century American cottage areas whether they are on a lake, near the ocean, or in the mountains.

Richard W. Crook was 98 years old when he died in 1948. Between the time he started The Cedars and his death he engaged in numerous other business activities. None of them were in the Springs/Red Clay area except one that involved his streetcar line.

In 1899 New Castle County followed a national trend and moved to establish a County Workhouse for prisoners. The county selected a 38 1/4 site acre, the former Flinn farm. The new brick workhouse was to house from 200 to 225 prisoners and included a power and heating plant, two cell blocks, a workshop where prisoners were employed, a quarry, a dining room, laundry, whipping post, and pillory.[49] Crook built a special car which he used to transport prisoners from the Wilmington Police Station to the New Castle County Workhouse at Greenbank.

Only a remnant of the prison remains. Brandywine Springs Hotel and Amusement Park are gone. However, the Springs/Red Clay Area still retains historic houses ranging from early mill owners homes to the early twentieth century cottages of The Cedars. The area also contains an early

mill that operated until quite recently, and "That never Failing Stream" Red Clay Creek with its tributary, Hyde Run. The Wilmington and Western Railroad still operates as an excursion train, and members of many of the old families still live here. Farming, milling, and vacationing, all dependent upon the natural environment and man-made transportation routes, have intermingled in this small area for nearly two centuries.

FOOTNOTES

1. Harkness Magazine, September, 1873, taken from Lippincott's p. 359

2. H. Clay Reed. Delaware, A History of the First State(New York, 1947) p. 479

3. Reed. p. 480

4. J. Thomas Scharf. History of Delaware Vol. II, (Philadelphia, 1888) p. 924

5. Carroll Wirth Pursell, Jr. "That Never Failing Stream - A history of Milling Along Red Clay Creek during the Nineteenth Century". University of Delaware unpublished Master's Thesis, June, 1958. p. 7-8

6. John A. Munroe, Federalist Delaware (New Brunswick, 1954) pp. 25-26

7. Pursell. "That Never Failing Stream" p. 5

8. Pursell, "That Never Failing Stream" p. 12,14

9. Pursell, "That Never Failing Stream" p. 21

10. Caroll W. Pursell,Jr., Two Mills on Red Clay Creek Published by Historic Red Clay Valley, 1964, p. 23

11. Pursell. "That Never Failing Stream". p. 33-36

12. Pursell. Two Mills on Red Clay Creek p. 7, 17,27

13. Monroe. Federalist Delaware p. 247

14. Ralph D. Gray. "Transportation and Brandywine Industries, 1800-1840", Delaware History Vol IX, No. 4, October, 1961. pp. 303-310

15. C.A. Weslager. Brandywine Springs. (Wilmington, 1949) p.3-8

16. Richard Guy Wilson. "Nineteenth Century American Resorts and Hotels". Victorian Resorts and Hotels. Essays from a Victorian Society Autumn Symposium. Richard Guy Wilson, Editor. (Victorian Society in America, 1982) p. 14

17. Weslager. Brandywine Springs pp. 19-21

18. Fell Historic District National Register Nomination. 1983

19. Sunday Star, August 23, 1942, p. 9

20. Weslager. Brandywine Springs. pp.60-63

21. Pursell. Two Mills on Red Clay Creek p.16

22. Fell Historic District National Register Nomination

23. Pursell. "That Never Failing Stream" pp. 54-58

24. Carol E. Hoffecker. Wilmington, Delaware, Portrait of an Industrial City. (University of Virginia Press, 1974)

25. Pursell. "That Never Failing Stream." p. 62-63

26. Pursell,"That Never Failing Stream." p. 21 and William Lloyd Bevan, History of Delaware Past and Present. (New York, 1929) p.286

27. Bevan, p. 286

28. Directory of Delaware and the Eastern Shore of Maryland, 1876-77, Commercial Printing Co.,(Wilmington, 1876)

29. Delaware State and Peninsula Directory, 1882, published by Ferris Brothers,(Wilmington, 1882)

30. Delaware State and Peninsula Directory 1897-98 Homer Barry, Publisher,(Wilmington,1898)

31. Baist Atlas of 1894, Delaware State and Peninsula Directory of 1897-98, Delaware State Directory of 1888, and Delaware State and Peninsula Directory of 1882

32. Weslager. Brandywine Springs p. 69

33. Most of the information on Brandywine Springs Park and Richard W. Crook is taken from Weslager's Brandywine Springs and newspaper articles about Richard Crook. A separate citation indicates material from other sources

34. Hoffecker. Industrial Wilmington p. 154-5

35. Richard W. Flint. "Meet Me in Dreamland: The early Development of Amusement Parks in America". Victorian Resorts and Hotels (Victorian Society in America, 1982) p.100-101

36. Flint. "Meet Me in Dreamland" p. 99

37. Flint. "Meet Me in Dreamland". p. 105

38. P.T. Reilly. "Local Mass Transportation in Wilmington and Vicinity". Delaware, A History of the First State. H. Clay Reed., Editor. (New York, 1947) p.28-29

39. Reilly. "Local Mass Transportation". p. 529

40. New Castle County Registry of Deeds: Book Z8, p. 402; Book K18, p. 451; Book K18, p.434; Book O17, p. 475; Book C11, p. 106; Book J6, p. 416

41. Undated lot plan in New Castle County Registry of Deeds

42. New Castle County Registry of Deeds

43. Manuscript U.S. Census, 1910

44. Frank R. Zebley. The Churches of Delaware (Wilmington, 1947) p. 135

45. Lot plan dated 1913 in New Castle County Registry of Deeds. This inconsistancy in the spelling of the name Justice continues today

46. A.J.Downing. The Architecture of Country Houses (New York, 1969) p.70-142. reprint of 1850 edition with new introduction

47. Downing. The Architecture of Country Houses p.72

48. Thomas W. Hanchett. "The Four Square House Type in the United States" Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture (Annapolis, 1982). p.51-52

49. Robert Graham Caldwell. "The New Castle County Workhouse" Delaware Notes (University of Delaware, 1940) p. 49, 57-59

COMMENTS RE NATIONAL REGISTER ELIGIBILITY

There are are number of properties within the Springs/Red Clay Area that are already listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Comments about these districts and other eligible properties are:

1. The Wilmington and Western Railroad. Listed in the National Register in 1979, a portion of the railroad and the and the station now called the Greenbank Station are located in the Springs/Red Clay Area. This nomination needs to be updated slightly to specify whether or not any other structures near the station should be included and to show the precise boundary of the nomination to the northwest of the railroad track between New Port Gap Pike and Greenbank Road. We suggest that all the structures be included and that the boundary be set at fifty feet to the northwest of the most northwestly structure. (Photos #8, #9, #10)

2. Greenbank Mill Historic Area. This amendment to an earlier nomination for the Greenbank Mill and Mill Owner's House was entered in the National Register in 1979. The boundaries are specific and should remain as they stand at present. (Photos #1,#2,#3, #5, #7)

3. Fell Historic District. Nominated to the National Register in 1983, this district has precise boundaries and should stand as is. (Photo #6)

4. Brandywine Springs Park/Brandywine Chalybeate Springs. The nomination for the area that is presently Brandywine Springs State Park was submitted to the National Register in 1973. The Keeper of the Register denied listing with the following comment: "Since the area has not actually been in continuous use as a park, the significance of the area appears to be based primarily on a series of unrelated historic events and no longer extant structures all within what is now the Brandywine Springs Park. Consequently, the property does not appear to have sufficient historical cohesiveness to merit its inclusion in the National Register as an entity." Since the park is still much less than fifty years old, we would concur with the Keeper on the nomination as presented. However, should any project impact on the park (which is actually outside the present area of study), we would suggest that an archaeologist look at the area. The spring was apparently used long before a resort developed here, and there are some existing ruins, particularly of later structures.

5. The Cedars. We believe that the area called The Cedars is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places as a district. The boundaries would follow property lines as shown on the accompanying map. The district's significance would be based on criteria A (historical) and C (architectural). Our reasons for believing that this district is eligible for listing in the National Register are included in the accompanying narrative. In summary, it is a late nineteenth/early twentieth vacation community that developed on the outsksirts of Wilmington and adjacent to a resort hotel and amusement park. The architecture of the houses in The Cedars represents styles typical of American vacation communities of the time and has changed very little since its inception. The level of significance would be State. (Photos #11 through #25) One building complex within The Cedars, 2311 Newport-Gap Pike, with its spring house and other outbuildings is probably eligible individually.

6. A group of late-nineteenth century houses. There is a small group of late-nineteenth century houses as noted on the map that should become a part of a thematic nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. These houses are on the southwest side of the Newport Gap Pike between

the Kirkwood Highway and Greenbank Road and on the northwest side of Greenbank Road between the Newport Gap Pike and Kirkwood Highway. It would require additional study of an area much larger than the one under consideration to determine the exact name and area of the nomination. Late Nineteenth Century Houses in The Red Clay Creek Valley would probably be most suitable. However, the theme might also include the Newport Gap Pike. With the advent of the Wilmington and Western Railroad in the late nineteenth century, there were a number of houses built near the Railroad, the Red Clay Creek, and the Newport Gap Pike. Most are Gothic in style, and many retain a large percentage of their original fabric. Many of these houses were also associated with the families who were connected with the mills and other enterprises of the Red Clay Creek Valley. We have discussed this possiblity with the Valerie Cessna of the New Castle County Planning Department and with Steve del Sordo of the Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs. (Photos #26, #27 #28, #29,)

7. Two houses well beyond the project area. There are two houses well outside the project area that might as well be mentioned at this time because of their proximity to Brandywine Springs Park. One, on Faulkland Road directly

opposite the entrance to Brandywine Springs State Park, is a late nineteenth century house and would probably be included in the group mentioned in #6 above. The other(Photo #32), at the northwest corner of the intersection of Faulkland Road and Newport Gap Turnpike is a much older house that has undergone some alterations. Because it is a very old house that was associated with several people important in the general history of the area, it may require further research in the future if any project should impact on it.

7. Prison Remnant As a remnant of a building, this is not eligible for listing in National Register. (Photo #33)